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9/18/06

Please replace the sixth paragraph of the Detailed Description, appearing at page 12, line 19 to page 13, line ~~11~~<sup>12</sup>, with the following replacement paragraph:

The slat conveying mechanism 36 of the block stringer assembly device 28 of the first depicted embodiment includes portions of the slat dispensing station 30 and the clamping station 34. In particular, the horizontal surface 42 of the slat dispensing station 30 and the lower base plate 70 and side plate 72 of the clamping station 34 act as bearing surfaces along which individual slats 24 travel when being conveyed by the slat conveying mechanism 36. The slat conveying mechanism 36 also comprises among other things, a cylinder 76, two parallel rows of guide wheels 78, and a slat position sensor 80. As seen in Figure 3, the cylinder 76 of the slat conveying mechanism 36 is positioned beneath the horizontal surface 42 of the slat dispensing station 30. The cylinder 76 is connected to a tooth member 82 that extends upwardly through the elongated slot 54 of the horizontal surface 42 and slightly into the slot 44 of the receiving bin 38 and is configured to selectively move the tooth member back and forth horizontally along the elongated slot. This assembly is an individual slat driver. One or more sensors 84 may also be provided to identify when the tooth member reaches limit positions relative to the elongated slot 54, so as to prevent damage to the components of the pallet assembly device 28 and to reverse the direction of the cylinder's 76 operation.

Please replace the eighth paragraph of the Detailed Description, appearing at page 14, lines 2 through 12, with the following replacement paragraph:

The block conveying mechanism 37 of the pallet assembly device 28 of the first depicted embodiment comprises another cylinder 100 and a plurality of sensors 102. Like the other depicted cylinders, the cylinder 100 of the block conveying mechanism is pneumatic. The piston is connected to the block dispensing station 32 and is configured and adapted to move a pushing

Please replace the thirty-fourth paragraph of the Detailed Description, appearing at page 24, lines 13 through 19, with the following replacement paragraph:

Slat dimensions have become standardized at five or eight inches wide and ½ inches tall. Length may be 36, 48 or 60 inches. Of course, it is within the scope of the present invention that slat and block dimensions be variable. However, because of the standard sizes typically used in warehouses, the fixtures on the chain are spaced accordingly. On vertical chain 330, fixtures ~~331~~ 346 and 348 (as seen in ~~figure 2~~ Figure 20) are spaced every 65 inches apart. On the horizontal chain, when configured to ~~assembly~~ assemble 36 inch long block slat assemblies, each fixture set is separated by 40 inches.

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9/18/06  
Please replace the thirty-ninth paragraph of the Detailed Description, appearing at page 25, line ~~22~~ <sup>21</sup> to page 26, line 3, with the following replacement paragraph:

In a first position, a slat at assembly station 314 is stopped with the leading edge of the slat and fixture 348A across from long block insertion ramp 365. The same first position stop will position at attaching station 316 a first long block of the preceding block/slat assembly. The stringer stops with its first long block just above stapler 384 and below pressure actuator 382. A third stringer will be in ejection station 318.

Please replace the forty-third paragraph of the Detailed Description, appearing at page 27, lines 1 through 10, with the following replacement paragraph: